

HISTORICAL ADDRESSES, DE-
LIVERED AT THE DEDICA-
TION OF THE MINISTERS' MONU-
MENT IN THE FIRST HOPKINTON
CEMETERY, NEAR ASHAWAY, R.
I., AUGUST 28, 1899.

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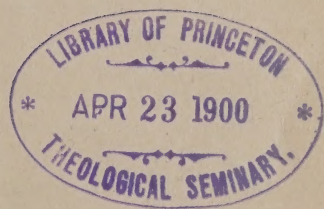




MINISTERS' MONUMENT.

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Hopkinton, R. I.
First Hopkinton Cemetery Association.

**Dedication of
Ministers' Monument,
Aug. 28, 1899.**



Printed for the Association
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DEDICATION

OF

Ministers' Monument,

August 28, 1899.

Few events in Rhode Island have carried with them more of historic interest than the Dedication of the Ministers' Monument in the old First Hopkinton Cemetery, on the 28th of August, 1899. With a history which had its beginning as far back as the settlement of the state, and the birth of the Seventh-day Baptist denomination in America, this Monument points to the blue sky by day, and the bright stars at night, telling to all who will read the story, of men, who, having been born and reared in Rhode Island, served the state honorably, either in public or private, for long lives, and who ever "fought a good fight," though not with weapons carnal.

The Monument has a two-fold significance, as it marks the spot where the "meeting-house" stood from 1680 to 1852, as well as memorializing the pastors who served the church from 1708 to 1852. Are we not then justified in referring to this Dedication as an event of much historic interest? The ridge of land upon which the Monument stands is skirted on the south and west by the Pawcatuck river, which at this point sweeps around a high ledge of rocks and the corner of the bluff as a pivot, changing its course from almost due west to a due north direction; but before making the turn, it is spanned by a bridge, known as the "Meeting-house Bridge." With the ledges upon both the north and south banks of the river, the high bluff upon the west bank around the angle, the river, glinting in the sunlight between overhanging trees, the green woods upon the right and left, the quaint old bridge in the foreground, and the broad plain stretching back to the north, it would be difficult to find a more picturesque spot, or a more peaceful resting place, when we lie down on the bosom of mother earth, and are covered by her green sod. Upon the bank of the river, before it turns around the ledge, was

the baptizing place for the church, which stood about forty rods back on the bluff. Many men and women can recall baptismal scenes upon this river bank when the entire congregation stood upon the natural terraces of the rocky hillside, which overlooked the water like a beautiful amphitheatre. Every one could see the solemn ordinance as the godly man and the candidate walked in and out of the water, while the words, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost," were heard by every onlooker. It is doubtful whether any place in Rhode Island, if in America, ever witnessed more baptisms than this spot, and surely none was ever more ideal in its surroundings. If we look for the baptizing place to-day, we shall find instead of the clean white sand which covered the bank, making it inviting to walk down into the stream, a deep, rich, black soil and a heavy growth of shrubs or trees. Times have changed in the last half century, and the always busy spindles and lathes of a mill farther down the river have called so loudly for more and more water, that in storing it up the dam has flowed back so as to entirely obliterate this sacred old landmark.

The Monument is made of Westerly granite, having a base 6'-0"x6'-0"x1'-4", a second base 5'-0"x5'-0"x1'-3", and a third, 4'-2"x4'-2"x1'-3", upon which stand a polished die, 3'-2"x3'-2"x5'-0" and cap, 4'-4"x4'-4"x2'-0", above which rises a cylindrical column 2'-2"x8'-10", which is surmounted by a cap 2'-4"x2'-4"x2'-1" and a finishing decoration 2'-4"x2'-4"x3'-6", making the entire height 25'-4". Upon the north face of the die is the following inscription:

1680—1899.

This Monument is a Memorial to the early Pastors of the Second Seventh-day Baptist Church in America, whose remains lie buried within the enclosing circle. They were stalwart men and sound preachers. They "fought a good fight" and "kept the faith." Upon this spot stood the house of worship from 1680 to 1852.

Upon the west face the following:

Thomas Hiscox, 1686—1773.
 John Burdick, 1732—1802.
 Joseph Maxson, 1672—1750.
 Abram Coon, 1763—1813.
 Matthew Stillman, 1770—1838.
 Daniel Coon, 1792—1858.

Upon the east face the following:

Joseph Clark, 1670-1719.
 John Maxson, 1638-1720.
 John Maxson, Jr., 1666-1747.
 Thomas Clark, 1686-1767.
 Joshua Clark, 1717-1793.

The marker for each grave bears the initial letters for the respective names upon the Monument, while those of the pastors' wives here buried are as follows:

Mary, wife of John Maxson, 1640-1718.
 Hannah, wife of Joshua Clark, 1718-1808.
 Prudence, wife of Abram Coon, 1762-1821.
 Elizabeth, wife of Matthew Stillman, 1775-1855.

The pastorate of each man was as follows:

John Maxson, pastor,	12 years,	from 1708 to 1720.
John Maxson, Jr.,	" 27	" 1720 " 1747.
Joseph Maxson,	" 3	" 1747 " 1750.
Thomas Hiscox,	" 23	" 1750 " 1773.
Joshua Clark,	" 20	" 1773 " 1793.
John Burdick,	" 9	" 1793 " 1802.
Abram Coon,	" 11	" 1802 " 1813.
Matthew Stillman,	" 25	" 1813 " 1838.
Daniel Coon,	" 14	" 1838 " 1852.

Joseph Clarke was assistant minister to Elder John Maxson from 1712 to 1719, and Thomas Clark assistant to Elder Thomas Hiscox from 1750 to 1767, while from 1852 to 1858 the preaching was done by supplies, Elder Daniel Coon dying the latter year. The remains of these early pastors were originally buried at various places; some of the graves being found only after much searching, and when found were covered with a wild tangle of briars and bushes. One, that of Rev. Thomas Hiscox, was not found at all, and it is supposed that no lettered stone had ever been placed to mark the grave.

Some time in the year 1883 the first removals were made to the "Circle," being the remains of Elder John Burdick and his wife, from an old enclosure about midway between Hopkinton City and Rockville. About a year later—in June, 1884—those of Joseph Clark, Jr., John Maxson, Mary, his wife, Thomas

Clarke, Joshua Clarke and Hannah, his wife, Joseph Maxson and John Maxson, Jr., were brought from an old burying ground on the south side of the Pawcatuck river, about three quarters of a mile above the "Meeting-house Bridge." Those of Abram Coon and Prudence, his wife, Matthew Stillman and Elizabeth, his wife, were brought from that part of the present cemetery formerly known as the "West Burying Ground," while those of Daniel Coon were from the "East Burying Ground."

Rev. I. L. Cottrell was pastor of the First Hopkinton church at the time of these removals, and being also a trustee of the cemetery, took a vital interest and assisted materially in the work. The coming of the Conference to the First Hopkinton church seemed to bring with it a fitting opportunity to Dedicate the "Ministers' Monument," and Monday afternoon was devoted to those exercises; a platform was erected for the speakers, and a large congregation assembled to witness the exercises. The otherwise warm August afternoon was tempered by a cooling breeze, and as the voices of the speakers and singers floated out over the silent resting places of generations of Sabbath-keepers who once worshiped in the "old" or the "new" meeting-house, who sat under, aye, who were brought to Christ under, the preaching of men who were being memorialized by this granite shaft—strong and rugged, clean and upright, fit emblem of the men themselves—the hearts of the great audience seemed to be stirred as one man. After the exercises were over and the people strolled away among the graves, looking up the names of relatives or friends upon the white headstones, and calling up memories of the dear departed who were wont to take part in Conferences of long ago, we believe there was a feeling in all minds that no half-day of this Conference had been more wholesomely or more profitably spent. As we sought to honor the names and the memory of those pioneers, who, though dead, again spoke to us down the long corridors of time, bidding us "go forward," we remembered that largely through their faithfulness and pious zeal, for more than two centuries, the Seventh-day Baptist Conference of 1899 became possible.

The following is the program of the dedicatory exercises:

Singing.

Prayer, A. E. Main.

Remarks, Stephen Babcock, President of the Association.

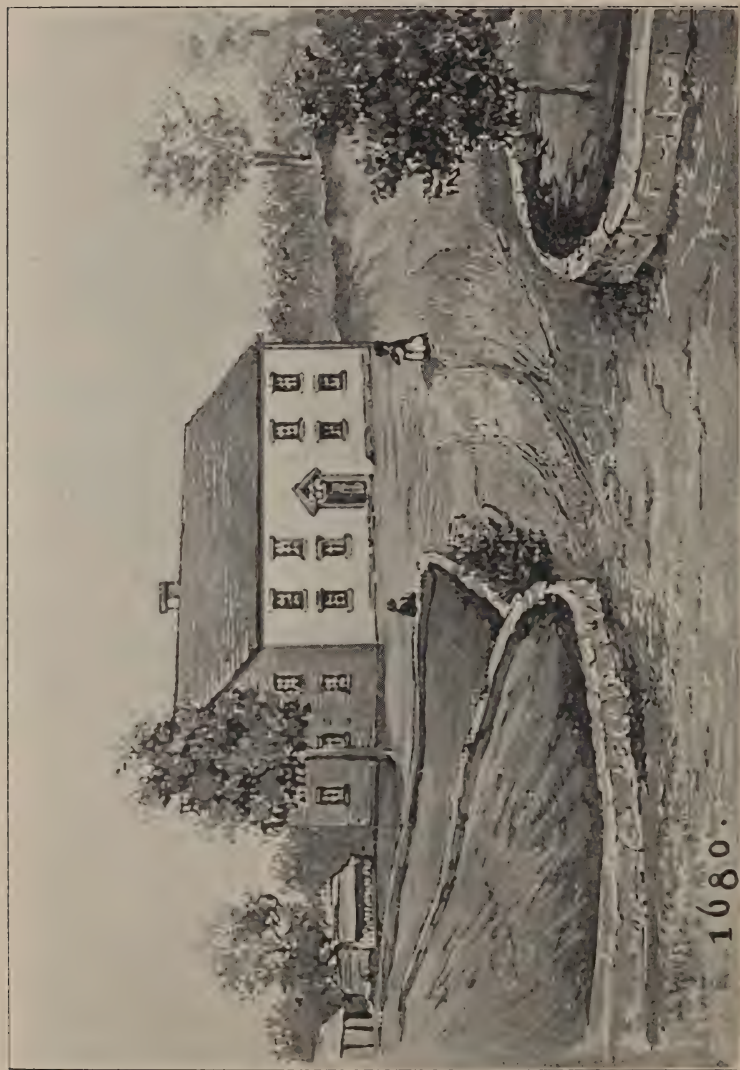
Poem, Mrs. Mary B. Clarke.

Singing.

Address, Pres. W. C. Whitford, Milton College, Wis.

Singing, America.

Benediction, Clayton A. Burdick.



THE OLD MEETING-HOUSE.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

BY STEPHEN BABCOCK, PRESIDENT.

Ladies and Gentlemen :—We are here to-day on historic ground to contemplate men and events that were not only prominent factors in the early history of Rhode Island, but were closely identified with the first settlements of New England.

Two hundred and sixty-four years ago, in the depths of a New England winter, Roger Williams was driven from his home and family in the colony of Massachusetts Bay, because he had preached the doctrine that the state had no right to control religious tenets. While he was seeking the confidence and friendship of the wild men of the forest, the good people who had forced him to flee, no doubt, thanked God they were rid of his heresies, and prayed that no more such trouble might fall to their lot. About two years later, however, others were preaching the theories taught by Williams, and to rid themselves completely of such odious doctrine, nineteen other persons were driven from their borders.

This company of stalwart men, who preferred banishment to the violation of conscience, sought the help of their friend Roger Williams, who assisted them in buying land from the Indians on the island of Rhode Island, where they settled in the spring of 1638. The first white child born in that new settlement afterward became the first pastor of the church erected upon the spot where we now stand. His name, John Maxson, is inscribed upon the monument before us.

The trials and hardships of the new settlers were many and grievous, but they never swerved from the principles which had compelled them to flee from their former homes.

In 1644 the settlements of Newport, Portsmouth, Providence and Warwick were consolidated under the name of the Providence Plantations, and were granted by King Charles II. the first charter that ever guaranteed complete religious liberty.

These hardy refugees had liberal ideas of freedom for all. In 1652 the Colony passed an act that no person should be held in slavery for more than ten years. The penalty for violating this act was a fine of forty pounds, which, at that time, was twice the value of a negro slave.

In 1660, by consent of the Colonial Legislature, a company of persons from the island of Rhode Island bought from the Indian Chief Sosoia a territory known by the Indians as Misquamicut, but which the new settlers called Westerly. It comprised the present towns of Westerly, Charlestown, Richmond and Hopkinton. The purchasers well knew that the ownership of Misquamicut was disputed; Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Connecticut each claimed it, and this disputed ownership must have greatly retarded its settlement. In 1661 two of the new settlers, Robert Burdick and Tobias Saunders, who must have declared their allegiance to Rhode Island, were seized by the authorities of Massachusetts and taken to Boston, where they were imprisoned till they should each pay a fine of forty pounds and give security in one hundred pounds for their future good conduct. In 1663 a Connecticut marshal, attempting to enforce Connecticut authority in Westerly, was by the Rhode Island authorities seized and taken to Newport, where he was kept a prisoner for eleven months. In 1671 John Crandall, a citizen of Westerly, who refused allegiance to Connecticut, was carried off by the Connecticut authorities and imprisoned in Hartford jail; and it was not until 1728 that Connecticut com-

pletely relinquished her claim to the land lying between the Pawcatuck River and Narraganset Bay.

Robert Burdick, Tobias Saunders and John Crandall were all members of this church. Westerly was incorporated in May, 1669, it being the first town organized under the new Colonial Charter of 1663, and the fifth in the Colony. At the time of the adoption of the Town Charter there were but twenty-four freemen in Westerly, four of whom were Babcocks; James, the emigrant ancestor of all the Rhode Island Babcocks, and his three sons, James, John and Job. After the incorporation of Westerly, King Phillips's war broke out, and it was a terrible scourge not alone to Westerly but to all the scattered settlements, far and near. Such were the treacheries and cruelties of the Indians that most of the pioneers were obliged to flee from their homes and take refuge on the island of Rhode Island. No delegate from this town appears in the records of the General Assembly for five years. An idea of the meagre financial ability of the town at that time can be had from the apportionment of a tax laid by the Colony in 1678. Newport was taxed 136 pounds, Portsmouth 68 pounds and Westerly only 2 pounds. Yet two years later, in 1680, while the settlers were slowly recovering from the ravages of war, they erected on this spot the first meeting-house built in the town, and for more than sixty years it was the only meeting-house in the then large town of Westerly.

There were Sabbath-keepers in Westerly before the organization of the Newport church, though the Newport church was organized nine years prior to the building of this house. It is interesting to note that Capt. James Babcock, the first white male child born in Westerly, was a member of this first church, as were also others of his family, including his grandfather, James, the emigrant; and Capt. James left to this church, by will, a legacy of one hundred pounds as follows: "I give and bequeath unto the Church of Christ in Westerly, unto which I belong, keeping ye Seventh-day Sabbath, One Hundred Pounds in money."

At first those who worshiped here retained their membership in the mother church, at Newport, which was organized Dec. 23, 1671. The two churches were conducted associately for about twenty-eight years; each one respectively holding Sabbath services, while the business meetings, communion services and yearly meetings alternated, but "on the seventeenth day of the seventh month" (old style), or Sept. 17, 1708, this church became an independent organization.

George Washington Green, LL. D., in his history of Rhode Island, referring to the Seventh-day Baptists, says: "In 1667 they were sufficiently numerous to justify them in asking that market-day might be changed from Saturday to some other day. Without breaking in upon the old custom by changing the day, the Assembly added Thursday as another market-day, and this quieted the scruples of honest and useful citizens."

Rev. Frederick Dennison, in "Westerly and its Witnesses," referring to this first church in Westerly, says: "It was a large and strong center of moral power. Direct and far it cast its sacred light. Its members held high and consistent ground against all forms of sin, and valiantly wielded the sword of the Spirit for the overthrow of private and public wrong. They were champions for liberty. Always they stood in the van of the anti-slavery movement. Not less ready and active have they been in the later reform of temperance. In these respects no organization has a purer and more praiseworthy record."

The members of this church have at all times been earnest and loyal supporters of the colony and the state, and have participated so extensively in

legislation and other public acts that, while Rhode Island is justly celebrated for her influence on behalf of civil and religious liberty, a generous part of that credit is due to those who have worshiped in this church. The Hon. Samuel Ward, a member of this church, was a Governor of Rhode Island. Rev. Joshua Clarke, a pastor of this church, was for several years a member of the State Legislature. He and five others, who were members of this church or the mother church at Newport, were among the first trustees of Brown University, and the original charter of Brown University was drafted by the Hon. Samuel Ward.

In 1835 the first meeting-house was torn down and a new one erected upon the same site. This second house was in 1852 removed to its present location between the villages of Potter Hill and Ashaway. After its removal, the two burying grounds which lay east and west of the old meeting-house, where were buried some of the pastors and many other worthy men and women, fell gradually into disuse. Occasionally public-spirited men would gather and clear away the briars and bushes which were steadily encroaching upon the graves. About Sept. 1, 1879, a movement was commenced to perpetually care for the grounds. It was then agreed that if a Cemetery Association should be legally organized with an endowment fund of at least five hundred dollars, the interest to be used to keep the grounds and graves in order, the church would deed to such Association the land where the meeting-house stood and the burying grounds adjacent. Within two weeks about one thousand dollars were pledged for an endowment fund.

Later a cemetery charter was obtained from the Legislature, several acres of land were bought adjoining the grounds deeded by the church, and the First Hopkinton Cemetery Association was placed upon what it is believed will prove an enduring foundation. After the Association was organized, the public highway, which ran through the grounds, was, by consent of the town council of Hopkinton, changed, thus leaving the cemetery an unbroken plot of about twelve acres.

Before attempting any improvements an experienced landscape architect was engaged, who surveyed and platted the grounds; and all grading and other changes have been made in accordance with his plan. Since the Association was chartered, it has raised for all purposes about seven thousand dollars, including twelve hundred dollars paid for the monument, and it has now invested an endowment fund of \$3,125, the income of which is to be forever used in caring for the grounds and certain specially endowed lots.

More than thirty years ago it was suggested that a monument be erected to mark the spot which for two centuries had been dedicated to the worship of Almighty God, and that upon the monument should be inscribed the names of the consecrated men who here served the church. The Association from its beginning reserved this place for such a monument; and its erection at this time was made possible through the generosity of the Misses Maria L. and Harriet W. Potter, two noble women who were well known and beloved throughout the denomination, and whose remains lie buried in this cemetery.

The pleasant task of recounting the self-sacrificing labors and consecrated services of the worthy men and women who worshiped in this church is reserved for those who follow me,—Mrs. Mary Bassett Clarke and Rev. William C. Whitford, D. D. Their intimate knowledge of denominational history and thorough scholarship assure us that none are better fitted to speak upon this subject, and I take pleasure in introducing Mrs. Clarke, who will read a poem prepared for this occasion.

DEDICATION POEM.

BY MARY BASSETT CLARKE.

To-day we stand upon historic ground,
 The footsteps of the years make little sound,
 For centuries have passed, with noiseless tread,
 And left us here a handful of the dead.
 More than two hundred years ago, 'tis found,
 A little church stood on this hallowed ground;
 An altar reared in the lone wilderness
 For prayer and praise, humanity to bless.
 We might turn back the dial-plate of time,
 And from the records of this favored clime
 Trace something of the trials, toils and tears,
 Which marked the pathway of those pioneers.
 Their dangers from a wily, cruel foe,
 In darkness ready for a stealthy blow.
 The stinted harvest and the scanty store,
 The wild beast prowling round the cabin door,
 The meagre recompense for toil, the scant
 Rewards of labor, which scarce kept from want,
 The struggles and privation day by day,
 With home and mother country far away.
 Not yet had even risen freedom's star,
 And our proud mountain eagle perched afar
 On his lone height, by man was dimly seen,
 The boldest dared not dream, what since has been.
 We at the best can never understand
 The sacrifices of that little band,
 Who made religious liberty their stake,
 And freely gave all else for conscience sake.
 Who made the Law of God their chief delight,
 Their great reward, a consciousness of right.

Years came and went and generations passed,
 Each with a leader worthy as the last,
 Who congregations gathered, far and near,
 Wise counsel from the Word of God to hear.
 The limped waters of yon rippling stream,
 Which glint and sparkle in the sun's bright beam,
 Were like Bethesda's pool in favored hour,
 Oft troubled by the healing angel's power,
 Or like the Jordan when its banks were lined
 By hundreds, who the path of peace would find,
 Repentant souls led by the Baptist in,
 To wash from heart and life the stains of sin.
 So these baptismal waters oft were stirred,
 And solemn vows were registered and heard,
 The voice of prayer and praise arose to him
 Who dwells enthroned amid the cherubim,
 And consecrated lives went forth, to make
 All living holier for religion's sake.
 Eternity alone can clearly show

With its rewards of happiness or woe
 The influence for good, the saving power,
 Which waits upon some heaven-appointed hour,
 When souls responsive to the inward voice,
 Make righteousness and happiness their choice.
 And thus we seek in vain to estimate
 The value of an influence so great
 As these good men possessed, each in his turn
 Kindling the fires, which through the ages burn.
 Each in his turn, when life's brave work was done,
 Folding his mantle with the setting sun,
 Heedless of praise or blame, laid down to rest,
 And kind hands heaped the turf above his breast.

The old church, yielding as the old must do,
 To time's rude touch, crumbled and passed from view,
 A new one took its place, which still appears,
 (Though burdened somewhat with the weight of years,
 And from its birth-place wandered quite away,)
 A shelter kind for worshipers to-day.
 And still the creed, which these bold fathers knew—
 Belief in God's own Law complete and true,
 Unmarred by human edict, nor made less
 By man's desire to sanctify and bless,—
 Finds many followers, and has far outgrown
 The narrow circle, which they made their own.
 Thus we, descendants of that royal band,
 And one in Christian fellowship still stand
 Upon their ancient platform, and by right
 Should make the Law of God our chief delight.
 And as our Lord, unheeding pain or loss,
 Up the rude steps of Calvary bore his cross,
 So we, our cross, triumphantly should take,
 And bear in duty's ways for his dear sake.

Here rest these reverend fathers. Through long years
 Have nodding daisies dropped their dewy tears
 In summer time upon the hallowed ground,
 And winter heaped her snows above each mound.
 The sacred dust in which life's fires once burned,
 Ere this, has to its kindred dust returned.
 The souls by struggle and temptation tried,
 Strengthened by pain, by sorrow purified,
 Cleansed by that blood which doth all sin efface,
 Have with the spirits of the just found place.
 Then wherefore come we, from the past to wake
 Sweet memories, in their name and for their sake.
 Do those who dwell enshrined in God's clear light,
 Made worthy and accepted in his sight,
 Need aught of earthly honors, or desire
 Our meed of praise, or heaven-pointing spire?

Nay, not for them, for words of praise or blame,
 Fall on "the dull, cold ear of death," the same.
 But for the living, who perchance may turn
 To this lone spot, and from this tablet learn
 That everywhere men estimate true worth,
 And moral greatness, higher far than birth,
 May catch some fragments of the truths these taught,
 The rare unselfishness with which they wrought,
 And from the past a nobler future wake,
 Owning and loving truth, for truth's own sake.
 Truth is eternal; goodness never dies,
 The good and true translated to the skies,
 Dwell in the changeless peace of God, and wear
 His glory round them as a garment fair.
 And thus with reverent hearts, with joy elate,
 We come this monument to dedicate,
 In memory of men, who from their youth
 Gave life-long service to the cause of truth.
 Who shirked no duty, from no hardship shrank,
 Nor from the cup of worldly pleasure drank,
 But lived as still the humble Christian lives,
 Strong in the strength which Christ his follower gives.
 Let coming generations know their worth,
 And emulate their virtues, 'till the earth
 Redeemed from curse of sin, and glorified
 In righteousness, shall ever more abide.

ADDRESS.

BY REV. WILLIAM CLARKE WHITFORD, D. D., PRESIDENT OF MILTON
 COLLEGE.

We have assembled in the early focal spot of a region with a significant history. This occasion, with its commemorative purpose, centers our thoughts upon the principal designs, transactions and influences of a very unique people. Specially is our attention fixed upon the marked traits and the constructive work of noble men and women, who were the revered ancestors of many present, and whose remains lie in the sepulchres of this sacred ground and in the scattered graveyards of adjacent neighborhoods. This landscape, encircled by the horizon, has been a cherished theater for the development of their salient plans and the exhibition of their illustrious acts through almost two hundred and forty years. The prospect on every hand is delightfully rural, embracing green pastures, cultivated fields, patches of varied woodland, substantial farm-buildings, hamlets and villages in clumps of trees between the low hills, brooks of living water quenching the thirst of cattle in the hot summer days, small winding rivers bordered with beautiful grassy banks and impelling the machinery of skillful artisans, and suitable workshops and factories, hives of needed industry at some distance, adorning the scenery and awakening its echoes by their steam whistles at sunrise.

The enchantment of this view, joyous and yet hallowed, is not broken by the imagination picturing within any inclosure the massacre of the first inhabitants by cruel and treacherous savages. Here can be traced no battle ground on which our brave countrymen have struggled for political independence or for the preservation of our national government. Within the



FIRST HOPKINTON CHURCH, ASHAWAY, R. I.

scope of the eye is not located any compact or straggling mart of commerce, with its streets thronged with busy men jostling each other in their absorbing pursuit of quickly-acquired wealth, and disfigured with myriad chimneys and towering, unsightly smokestacks pouring forth volumes of their pitchy vapors to pollute the atmosphere.

In this spacious burial place of beloved and honored dead, our hearts are filled with such subdued and reverential emotions as are experienced in a sanctuary of God, when funeral services are held to recount the righteous deeds of a venerable and departed father, and to commend his aims and beneficent labors to be followed and practiced by others. Our understanding is here invigorated and enriched, as it fully grasps the distinctive associations that have consecrated these hilltops, valleys, smoothly-flowing streams, and outlying localities, and made them conspicuous and endeared in the memory of thousands. Our minds cannot refuse to award sincere and grateful esteem to the sagacious, heroic and saintly founders of the large and permanent communities, churches and municipalities hereabouts. But this need is heightened into complete homage, when we adequately realize that their lives were spent, amidst untoward sacrifices, hardships and persecutions, in a prolonged but victorious struggle to establish, with sparse opportunities, some of the basal facts and principles of the unadulterated gospel and of modern civilization, and to transmit, unimpaired to other generations, civil and religious rights and privileges, the most precious and exalted in the world. Alas! these crucial efforts, celebrated and fruitful beyond the expectation of those who achieved them, enduring poetry has hitherto failed to embellish, sensible fiction to popularize, and impartial history to extol or worthily record. But tradition has been more generous in glorifying them in the remembrance and appreciation of men.

Let us now pass to the consideration of the prominent events that have characterized the origin, growth and masterful power of the church, under whose favorable auspices, and in the holy discharge of its assigned duties for this hour, we all dedicate this graceful and appropriate monument of native granite as a lasting memorial of the stalwart pastors, who, on the area filled by this audience, broke the bread of eternal life to their hearers for nearly one hundred and fifty years.

The controlling nucleus in the earliest settlement of Southwestern Rhode Island was formed in this immediate vicinity, principally on the opposite side of Pawcatuck River. It seems that a tract of land extending about fifteen miles northward from the ocean and ten miles eastward from the river just named, had been, by the year sixty-one in the seventeenth century, purchased for speculation and occupancy, by a private company in Newport, R. I., from a Niantic sachem, to whom it had been presented by the ruling chiefs of the Narragansett tribe as a reward for his valiant assistance to them in driving across this river the aggressive Pequot nation from their hunting and fishing grounds.

About September first, in the year mentioned, only three members of this large company, Tobias Saunders, Robert Burdick and Joseph Clarke, Jr., had the enterprise to reach this tract, which was designated as "the farthest or remotest corner of the Colony's jurisdiction," and "to take possession" of it for themselves and the other proprietors. But they were moved by a higher incentive, and that was to help by dwelling therein to acquire a just and perpetual title to this region for Rhode Island, then very small in its actual territory, and struggling to spread its new ideas. They were required to locate "the town" that "should begin on the north side of the brook by the great neck,

and so as to extend along the river on the highway." They selected allotments for their farms, which appear to have been joined together into a single body, and their houses situated not a mile apart. After a very few years these pioneers became Sabbatarian Baptists. Other residents on the island of Newport, the Eden of New England, generally of the same faith or afterwards converts to it, soon followed, and selected their new homes in the direct neighborhood. Among these was John Crandall, an elder in the First Regular Baptist church of the place from which he emigrated. About a dozen years before he had won the distinction of having been arrested, imprisoned, fined, and threatened with "being well-whipped" in Boston, Mass., as "an erroneous person and a stranger," for attending, with his pastor, the famous Dr. John Clarke, regarded as "one of the ablest men of his century," and with another elder of the church, a meeting in that colony for the purpose of celebrating the Lord's Supper with an aged and infirm brother, in whose home he also listened to the opening of a discourse by the pastor, presenting doubtless the distinguishing views of the Baptists. After his arrival in this slightly-settled portion of the state, he was the original minister of Christ embracing our belief, and perhaps the only one of any religious connection for several years, in all that region formerly called the Narragansett Country.

These inhabitants traveled hitherward in boats along the seashore, or through the dense wilderness along Indian trails and bridle paths, fording streams, on constant outlook for the bear, the wolf or the panther, and some of them obtaining shelter at night in friendly wigwams. In making their first clearings in the forest by felling and burning the heavy trees, and by cutting away the thick underbrush wherever growing, they found the land to contain numerous loose, hard stones, many of them immense boulders, and to be composed generally of a coarse granite soil, rendered so by the crushing and grinding glaciers, scores of feet thick, which traversed southward, broadcast, over New England in remote ages, scarring and polishing countless ridges and ledges of primeval rock, dislocating huge blocks from them, and spreading the disintegrated materials thinly over the surface, particularly in this section. Near running springs of water they usually built their snug log cabins, which were, in some cases, half buried in the earth, also destitute of windows and roofed with bark or slabs sawed out by hand.

As you enter the only room in one of these rude dwellings, you see the few families of this community, children, youths and middle aged parents, gathered there for an evening visit. Perchance, with them is some patriarch who has come on a toilsome journey from his Newport home "to sympathize" with his loved daughters or sons in what he thinks to be their "lonesome conditions." The group form a half-circle in front of the wide fireplace, in which the blazing logs or fagots light up the serious faces of the older members, giving them a glow of cheerfulness, and revealing to you also the rough, home-made furniture. They are earnestly talking about the dear relatives and intimate friends they have left in the places of their birth or former residence. They recall to mind their trials and adventures while on the way to this purchase, then known as Misquamicut. They describe their exhausting toils in subduing the ground and in providing sufficient food and home-spun clothing for themselves, especially their little ones. They calmly and understandingly discuss the immutable claims of God's weekly Sabbath upon their consciences, an obligation recently first apprehended by them. The conversation is interrupted as nutritious nuts, collected in the woods about them, cracked and ready for eating, are passed to each one in the company. Before separating for the night, they all bow upon their knees, and a

prayer, simple and heartfelt, is offered to the Heavenly Father for his protection and guidance in their new abodes, and in their performance of the still untried duties before them. A gifted mother writes at this time to her dotting parents: "The Lord hath been pleased to give us here many sweet and comfortable days of refreshing, which is great cause of thankfulness."

Accessions to this little settlement are made, sometimes rapidly, in the next twenty-five to fifty years. Kinsmen and earlier acquaintances remove from Newport, also resolved to erect homes and begin anew the subjugation of farms with the soil in its primitive state, cheaper and broader in extent than those back on the island. Sterling and conscientious freemen are welcomed from Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay and Middle Connecticut, dissatisfied with the petty religious tyranny that had been imposed upon them. Southeastern Pennsylvania sends a small quota of sturdy and independent leaders, acute in intellect and fond of controversy. Recent emigrants from the mother country and some refugees from Southern France, Huguenots, arrive seeking propitious chances for earning a competence or for enjoying unmolested their doctrinal tenets and convictions of duty as sincere Christians, hitherto despised, hated, and sometimes in danger of martyrdom. They are assured that here are unimproved lands, hospitable hosts, and a satisfactory asylum.

They are finally established at desirable points in the range of country stretching at least from Mastuxet Brook and Quonochontaug northward to Yawgoog and Winhook Ponds, and from Weecapaug and Usquepaugh streams westward over this section and the state line near us to Shunock River in old Southerntown, thus once designated by Massachusetts as a share of its possessions. Many of these "new beginners," so addressed at times, accepted at length the principles of the Seventh-day Baptists, and united with the earlier residents in their worship on the Sabbath. For miles in every direction from this view, all these occupants engaged in the work of constructing abandoned and existing highways; in chopping down the large timber where are now gardens, village lots, meadows, and harvest fields; in building houses to be succeeded by more commodious ones; in damming up the river, within a stone's throw of us, for a most useful mill that was removed in the last century; in applying, later, the same water for similar purposes at more convenient locations down the channel, and on a tributary stream, not within our sight; in subdividing as well as surrounding their farms with these numerous stone-walls; in erecting a plain but serviceable meeting-house for themselves; in choosing a baptismal pool in the Pawcatuck, just beyond that gray, irregular knob of rough granite rocks; and in selecting near their homes and in this cemetery attractive knolls, the gravel deposits of the ice age, for the interment of their bodies and those of their descendants. So these public roads, these by-ways, and these acres, once impressed by their feet, these water courses in which thousands of them, as candidates, have been buried with Christ, and whose mechanical force, when utilized, has contributed materially to their support; those old-fashioned dwellings, a few of which still remain, and these humble graves with headstones darkened by age, and some covered with moss,—those a habitation for the living, and these a receptacle for the dead—both the prized relics of their handiwork,—all of them aid in setting apart this immediate region to high spiritual and ennobling ends, the most truly inspiring in the experiences of men.

But let us look at some general interests other than those confined solely to these Sabbath-keepers themselves. They held certain views and were placed under many conditions usual to other Puritans in New England and Great Britain. They all lived in what authors have styled the most criti-

cal period in the world's history. They showed that aspiration for loftier ideals, attainments and motives of work, constitutes the most persistent force in human affairs, and that it is almost as effective as a miracle. They nurtured the conviction that they were always under the close inspection and assistance of God, to whom they were individually responsible for every thought and act. They endeavored to manifest the most rigid morality in their daily lives and absolute sincerity in their public worship. The Bible, through their efforts, became the first really popular work in the homes of the two countries. The ceremonies, formalities, worldliness and assumed authority of the established Church of England,—these they unsparingly condemned. They encouraged migration across the Atlantic and colonization in America, in order to occupy a vastly better vantage ground at the time for the evolution of their chosen plans and enterprises. They adopted and advocated ideas of home, society, government and religion, the most advanced and formative in Europe, and surely elsewhere in the two hemispheres. They won and preserved the political liberty that the entire English-speaking race enjoys today. It is this inestimable boon which, as a fundamental condition, has enabled the British government at home and in its colonies to rank as the ablest commercial and enlightened sovereignty on the globe. Its voice is the most potent uttered in the courts and councils of nations. The same inspirations of freedom in civil life urged the fathers of the Revolution to resist the injustice and usurpations of the King and Parliament of England, and to secure our deliverance from their stupid despotism. The same impulse, like the mighty swell of water beneath a ponderous steamship on the ocean, lifted the American people into the fixed determination to consolidate the separate states into a perpetual union, an indissoluble nation, surely a most efficacious and widely-reaching result. It abolished negro slavery within our borders, and shattered the political supremacy of its former abettors and apologizers. It has lately expelled the decaying, effete, corrupt and tyrannical rule of Spain from fertile islands in the tropics.

The people of this Colony, in their first two generations, promoted some movements, but more often strenuously opposed others, of the Puritans elsewhere in New England. Both parties were in accord in refusing to appeal to the teachings of prelates and the dictates of hierarchies, or to consult the impressions of the so-called divine power operating in their own hearts, as ultimate authority in accepting their religious doctrines and in discharging their religious duties. The Scriptures were the only supreme arbiter of their opinions and practices in serving Christ. They aimed, with an unfaltering zeal, to disseminate their cherished views and to establish their molding influences in a wide belt of territory stretching far toward the setting sun. In asserting their right to complete control and management of all their local civil affairs, a right inherited from their Anglo-Saxon progenitors, they created a township system of laws and direction, the basis of pure democracy in our country, and regulated the authority of their colonies under charters that granted full republican privileges. These furnish the prototypes of the present political organizations in the United States, beginning with the school district and ending with the general government. They combined to protect their homes from the murderous attacks of the native tribes of Indians, who conspired in the King Philip's War to exterminate them or destroy their settlements; but these tribes were themselves then nearly annihilated in the well-known Swamp Fight, only fourteen miles to the east of us. They provided the advantages of elementary and higher learning as next in value to the benefits conferred by the Christian religion. They acquired, through the peculiar

culture that their ideas and ways of living imparted, the marked ability to conceive definitely the most abstruse theories respecting private obligation, public conduct, and the inculcations of the Holy Word; and what is more admirable, the ability to adapt these theories to their constant and every-day practices.

But Rhode Island had its birth and childhood amidst bitter and distracting controversies with its neighboring colonies. These related to what should be the religious principles and usages of its inhabitants, its form of civil government, and the territory, if any, it should possess and control. Its founders, including also the original leaders of the Sabbatarian communities at Newport and in old Westerly, advanced the bed-rock positions that, in compliance with the spirit and philosophy of genuine Puritanism, total separation should exist between the state and the church in the management of their own distinct affairs, and there should prevail absolute toleration of all religious beliefs and behavior consistent with social order and the demands of morality. These positions sustain the doctrine of soul-liberty, or the perfect freedom of every one to follow the decisions of his conscience. As specifically applied, they forbade the colonies to claim that a citizen, having the privilege to vote and hold a public office, should first be a member of an approved church; to determine who should be accepted by such a body, who its officers, and what its creed and articles of covenant; to compel the attendance of the people upon its services, and to punish them for refusal or neglect in complying; to support its ministry by public taxation; and to fine or incarcerate a heretic, an infidel, or a person contumacious of their orders and edification. On the contrary, the church has no prerogative by which it can force upon the body politic its dogmas and modes of procedure; by which it can require that only freeman belonging to it or submitting to its faith shall administer civil control; and by which it can, while in itself organically complete and independent in its own government, dictate to other religious or irreligious organizations what views they shall adopt and what measures they shall execute. It is noticeable that the Sovereign of England in signing, to the amazement of his court, the last very liberal charter of this colony, which embodied, in substance, these new and striking principles, observed that "he would experiment whether civil government could consist with such liberty of conscience."

Not even this attitude, halting as it was, did these other colonies assume. They arrayed themselves, at once and for years, in determined hostility against the feeble band, the heroic advocates of imperishable truths and the defenders of inestimable rights. They made attempts, through public speech and the press, to confute the arguments adduced; to effect a recantation by repeated persecutions, including even whipping before spectators; and to check the growing popularity of these ideas by maligning the character and the labors in most opprobrious words, such as "fanatics," "malcontents," "turbulent inhabitants," "living in imbecile condition," "heretics," "guilty of outrageous practices," and having the forms of religion despised by "true Christians." History has rarely furnished a more surprising anomaly than that exhibited in this struggle to foist arbitrarily, upon an intelligent people, the humble believers of a higher type in the Redeemer, a hated theocracy, by New England Puritans who had themselves fled from galling religious oppression in the old world, and who had found on these shores, greeting them with cheer and hospitality, a desired refuge and an undisturbed worship of God.

But this antagonism culminated in a most shameful and vexatious effort

to deprive Rhode Island of any landed possessions outside of Providence and Newport, and particularly west of Narragansett Bay. By such a scheme, if successful, they expected to uproot all implantings of this toleration, or to confine them to the two original towns in which they were first propagated. The settlers in this southwestern region, Sabbath-keepers very largely, were agitated, as they had not been before, by the questions that were pressed imperiously upon them and could not escape definite answers. They resolutely united to prevent the incursions of Massachusetts and Connecticut into the territory that forms at least three fourths of the area finally granted to the Colony, and in which they were at the time its chief wards. The head men in this resistance from the beginning were four of the original purchasers of this tract, whose names have already appeared in this address. Truer guardians, more earnest in the cause they had espoused, and comprehending the important issues at stake, could not have been thus secured. On the charge that they were trespassers upon the alleged jurisdiction of these two adjacent colonies, they were seized, threatened with heavy fines, dragged from their homes, and confined in crowded jails at Boston and Hartford. Various members of this community were compelled to submit often to painful and bitter annoyances and fears from unjust and overbearing demands made upon them in this contest. The nature and source of these can be judged from a pitiful complaint of a spirited woman, one of this number, who wrote in 1673, that they were then in expectation of the coming of officers from the colony on the west to extort violently from her husband a public tax of eight shillings, nearly three times the amount of his ~~daily~~ ^{her day's} earnings, toward the payment of ministers' wages for serving in churches to which neither of them belonged; and also to draft some of their men as soldiers to operate against the Dutch, who had, in that year, re-captured New York from the English, and were planning an invasion into Southwestern Connecticut.

It is easy to imagine the several meetings of the harassed freemen at the house of Tobias Saunders, who lived just over that range of hills to the south, and who, acting as a conservator of peace, had on his own motion or by order of the Governor, summoned the colonists in his neighborhood to devise the most effective means to thwart the designs of the aggressors and to uphold the rights of their weak government. On these occasions they willingly declared by resolutions or oaths their entire fealty to its authority and interests. It must be confessed that they were under special obligation to pursue this course; for in the purchase and occupancy of their land, they had at the outset solicited and obtained the approval and assistance of the Court of Commissioners of Rhode Island. Their allegiance had been tested, as it was also subsequently, by urgent appeals from their General Assembly and other sources, not to yield in any case to the schemes and encroachments of Connecticut, the last contesting colony. The strife was so vehement at times, that serious danger of resort to arms existed, and a judicial session in Westerly was broken up by a marshal with mounted troops from beyond the river. The surrender of their farms and homes to the enemy involved, in their opinion, the overthrow of the cause of religious liberty in their domain; and, in fact, it would doubtless thus have been in all New England and for a considerable period in America. Their faithfulness in this emergency, lasting at least forty years, was the principal factor in the retention of the whole Narragansett or King's Province in the territory now controlled by Rhode Island. To them, stigmatized by prejudiced writers as "intractable backwoodsmen," this credit is ascribed in contrast, by its most reliable historian. He says in referring to the final establishment of the western boundary line

of the Colony, then forming the main subject in dispute: "It is to the firmness of the men of Westerly in every stage of this protracted conflict, that the state owes this favorable result;" and he adds, "Except the obtaining of the two charters, it was the most important event in the history of the state up to that time." Another author in a briefer work stating how Rhode Island was "Confirmed in the jurisdiction over Narragansett," remarks, "Much of this was owing to the staunch loyalty of the men of Westerly." Certainly, it furnished the only opportunity Rhode Island could probably ever possess of becoming a recognized colony with an independent civil power in New England and ultimately a constituent state, even with its few counties and towns, in the American Union. To this commonwealth was also given the invaluable privilege of winning its crowning glory, the organization of the only civil government at least in modern times, which first guaranteed the fullest permission to all religious bodies within its limits, to control exclusively their own special interests. More than this, it has seen its distinctive principles incorporated into all our state and national constitutions, commended now by all enlightened statesmen at home and abroad, and recognized in the polity of all denominations of Christians in our country and in all systems of public and private instruction in our forty-five states.

But another and a higher mission was appointed for fulfillment by Providence to the steadfast and vigorous observers of the holy Sabbath in this region. They had, without hesitation, used their powers of mind and their efficient services in securing thus far the triumphs of real Puritanism, in whose struggles and under whose training our earliest churches in America and Great Britain had their origin. To these colonists had come a restful sense of personal safety and deliverance from civil and social contentions with neighboring communities across the state line. Now was afforded them comparative freedom to test their strength in a cause more congenial, and yielding results in the future promotive of greater and more enduring weal and righteousness.

Let us now behold these forefathers as they are in the secure possession of their lands in this section. Most of them, while residing here or in Newport, had embraced the sacred day of the Fourth Commandment. While formerly in the Baptist denomination, the leaders had accepted, in their ideas of church government, such provisions as these: Each brother or sister must enter its membership on his or her own volition, assuming all the responsibility in his or her own behalf; baptism must be confined, therefore, to adults, administered by immersion, and constitute the door of admission to the church and the sacrament of the Lord; and all rules of the body and all articles of its creed must be clearly deducible from the obvious teachings of the New Testament, thus making it in form and constitution not unlike the churches established by the apostles. In contradiction to the tenets of their Baptist brethren, they adopted unreservedly the doctrine of the supremacy and perpetuity of all God's law as delivered on Mount Sinai, acknowledged and enforced everywhere in both the Hebrew and the Greek scriptures; or, in other words, they held that the gospel does not abolish the Decalogue and render superfluous the essential revelations of God in the old Jewish economy.

Meetings for worship occurred at first in private houses. At that time the sisters, as well as the brethren, were welcomed, as they have been since by this church, to its sessions on the Sabbath and on any other day for the transaction of its business. They prayed, exhorted, gave their opinions on the management of its interests, and represented it on committees and in

public letters sent to other religious organizations. The simple services were then conducted by some competent brother in their own number or from the society at Newport. Singing of devotional hymns was introduced as a part of the worship, an innovation not countenanced by the other Baptists of New England. The prayers were uttered with such earnestness and fervor that they seemed really "to have audience in the court of heaven." Before their church building was erected, the preaching in those fifteen to nineteen years was evidently furnished, a portion of the time, by their only minister, Elder John Crandall, already described. Baptism of some Sabbath believers in Westerly was probably performed by him in the Pawcatuck River, as that of others elsewhere was certainly by him in another stream. Then yonder pool at "the Meeting-house Bridge," the inflowing tide of the ocean at "Green End" on the beautiful shore of a narrow bay at Newport, and the small cove of the Thames River near the "Old Town Mill" at New London, Conn., all had their waters, in the last half of the seventeenth century, stirred and consecrated by this evangelist, and also by the first pastor of the Newport church, in devoting therein to the service of Christ the future lives of the earliest converts to the Sabbath in our country.

Sorrowful and weeping must have been that little band of neighbors, as they assisted, on the second day of August, in 1670, Elder Crandall in burying the dead body of his esteemed first wife in a slight elevation of land by his house then standing near a charming brook that finally empties, to the south of us, its waters through a natural pond into the Pawcatuck. Samuel Hubbard, our first annalist, writes of her, who had early succumbed to the hardships of a pioneer life, that she was "a Sabbath-keeper, the first that died in that blessed faith in New England," and, as far as has been learned, in all America. This event occurred a year before the old church at Newport was formed, and thirty-eight before the First Hopkinton. Six years later, her consort, our earliest "traveling minister" among "the old comers," followed her to the better land, and his remains were laid at her side.

The interest in the opening experiences of this company must not prevent our passing to the treatment of some signal facts in the next period of their history, which extends from about 1680, when their first meeting-house was erected on this lot, to September 17, 1708, when their church was here permanently organized. We cover four-fifths of the time in which the brethren and sisters in Westerly had their names enrolled on the list of the Mother church at Newport. In the beginning it had become evident, as future events substantially proved, that it would be exceedingly wise to constitute another Sabbatarian church outside the island of Newport and its vicinity, and in this wilderness where cheaper lands could be bought and settled, and where the members could have greater liberty to devise and execute broader and more effective schemes for governmental and religious operations. Here were favorable opportunities to own much larger farms, and to acquire surely, though more slowly, the requisite means of constant support. Here were presented no such inducements to follow occupations, particularly commercial ones, which seemed inimical to the strict keeping of the Sabbath on the Seventh-day of the week. Here could not prevail the distractions of mind arising out of sharp controversies between rival Christian bodies and rival business enterprises. Here agriculture would be their chief pursuit for many years. Here was a region of country at least twenty miles across in every direction, in which they, the pioneer occupants, could, at length, establish a church, and have within that area no competing one of any denomination in at least the next sixty years, and, in fact, none equal to it in ability and in-

fluence during that time in the whole Colony, except at Newport and Providence, one thirty and the other sixty miles distant by the usual courses of travel. By gaining a large membership in which there should be many capable and consecrated men and women, they could exercise almost unlimited control over that region and in localities over its borders, as the champions of the highest moral and religious interests therein. Also, they could, in the next two centuries, strengthen and advance, in various ways, their "connection," as, perhaps, no other church in it has done in this country or abroad.

In this period closing, as already stated, in 1708, there originated, between what were really the two main branches of the Newport church, the practice of alternating their meetings once in four weeks between that place and Westerly, and of using the Sabbath on these occasions for "breaking bread," as they termed a covenant and communion season, and also generally the day before or the day after and sometimes both these days, for the transaction of church business and the exercise of due watch care and discipline, when necessary, over its members. At such times the brethren and sisters engaged in worship with great solemnity and attentiveness of mind to the hearing of the Word. They related their intense spiritual experiences in "Keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus," in the careful searching of their own hearts, in the nurture of ardent Christian love for each other, and in the inexpressible joy they felt by walking "in the new and living way." The duties of admonition and withdrawal of fellowship were performed with becoming delicacy and firmness, while reminding the incorrigible that their derelictions were "to the dishonor of God, the scandal of his truth, and the grief of his people."

This alternation of the religious services gave the opportunity for the establishment of the General Meetings of the different societies forming the Newport church, the one at New London constituting the third. The first of these on record was appointed at Westerly in the meeting-house, Sept. 24, 1692, while slight evidence indicates that such an arrangement had existed for a brief period. The others during the subsequent years of this joint membership were also held at this central place and in the same month or the following one. The large congregations were composed mainly of the residents in the surrounding country, though leading brethren and sisters from the other two Sabbatarian branches of the church were usually present, and contributed largely to the social enjoyment and the spiritual profit of these occasions. The three earliest proprietary settlers in this region were, when the first session of these meetings occurred, still living on their lands not distant from the house of worship, and they undoubtedly rejoiced at the evident progress that the cause lying so near their hearts had really attained. As many as five of the seven founders of the original church in 1671, were also certainly alive, and at least two of these were occasionally in attendance upon the meetings during the first years of the period just described. One of them was Tacy Hubbard. No other scene of those early days in the history of our people should be more clearly depicted in our minds than the one witnessed on the 12th of September, 1697, when members of the different societies were present at the general gathering for that year, and were engaged in considering a serious question affecting the Christian standing of a beloved brother, and when there were heard, most likely on this very spot, the last known public advice and religious testimony of this sister in Christ, then in her ninetieth year of age, her greatly esteemed husband having entered eight and a half years before upon his eternal reward, a woman of superior discernment and moral courage, the first convert to the Sabbath in America, truly a sainted mother in our

Israel, and the ancestress of all the Burdicks, the Langworthys, nearly all the Clarkes, and their posterity, who have ever been received into our churches. At some of these meetings, a few Sabbath-keepers from Piscataway and Cohansey, N. J., and from Philadelphia and New Providence, Pa., were most cordially welcomed. In the one held, Oct. 11, 1705, by the request of the brethren in the former state, their leader who first embraced the Sabbath among them was, by the act of the people here, ordained to be "the elder of their congregation," and his church with himself was "admitted into a Christian association and communion" with the societies of Rhode Island and Connecticut that instituted these meetings. This was an expressive movement pledging the ultimate union of all our churches in the General Conference.

On these different occasions the sermons were presented by William Hiscox, the pastor of the Newport church and one of its constituent members, by William Gibson, a learned elder from London, Eng., and the successor of John Crandall in serving the Westerly society; by Edmond Dunham, a descendant of a Pilgrim father, and the originator of our New Jersey churches; and by William Davis, from Philadelphia, the author of a sharp controversial work entitled, "Jesus the Crucified Man, the Eternal Son of God." Other brethren residing in Westerly, afterwards called to exercise their gifts as ordained ministers, were very probably invited to preach at times. If present in these audiences, you would have listened to long discourses, full of quoted texts from the Scriptures, marked by original and favorite forms of expression, suggesting practical duties, treating of salvation obtained alone through the sacrificial death of Christ, measuring your faith adequately by your works, containing fervent appeals to escape final destruction, and impressing upon your conscience the binding and unvarying claims of the Fourth Commandment.

When the Westerly society decided, at the date already given, to form "a distinct congregation by themselves," it registered at once the names of twenty-five brethren and forty-seven sisters in its list of members. At least three-fifths of the brethren and about one-third of the sisters transferred their standing from the mother church. The other communicants were admitted on their direct application. At that time all the original steadfast Sabbath-keepers at Newport were deceased, the last one being Stephen Mumford, who introduced into this country, forty-three years before, the observance of the divinely-appointed day for sanctified rest, and who was buried, with marks of sincere respect, in the year prior to the establishment of the church here. The only survivor in the families who were the earliest residents in Westerly was Joseph Clarke, Jr. He had served as the efficient clerk of the Newport church probably from near its beginning. As a leader in the new organization, and as a prominent freeman in the town, he acquired great influence. By the latter body he was chosen for thirty-two consecutive years to record its transactions, and he represented it for six terms as a deputy in the General Assembly of the Colony. For a considerable period he was requested by this church to act as an assistant preacher. Two of his sons, a son-in-law, Thomas Hiscox, a grandson, and a great-grandson of himself and his associate proprietor, Robert Burdick, and also a later settler, John Maxson, Sr., and two of his sons, became ministers—eight in all—who, with three others, the descendants of two still later occupants of lands in this section, form the list of all these early pastors of the First Hopkinton church.

Just one hundred and fifty years constitute the period that began with the choice of the first of these undershepherds and ended with the death of the last

in the large cemetery near his home,

one of their number. To contemplate their characters and their services as a whole and to express our estimate of them as "stalwart men and sound preachers," is the special purpose of this large assemblage of grateful people in gathering here beneath the open sky and on this green turf, and in participating with solemn interest in these memorial exercises. We now look upon the very ground in which the remains of all these anointed messengers of Christ, except one, and the remains of the exemplary wives of four of them, have been deposited with pious regard in a semicircle before this shaft, which stands on the exact spot that was beneath the pulpit of the old meeting-house, and on which are inscribed in enduring letters the eleven names of these men. In making an historical survey of the long stretch of time covered by their lives, there can be noticed only certain plans and measures of the church which best illustrate its spirit and its efforts in promoting the sacred cause that justifies its existence. An author, after critically studying its whole career, has remarked, "I am at a loss to find a parallel in ecclesiastical history."

The membership of the church, counting all the baptized candidates, numbered, four years after its organization, one hundred and twenty-nine; fifty years afterwards, nearly six hundred; and at the end of a century, almost one thousand. Clarke says in his history of our denomination, published in 1811, that he believed this was the largest religious body in his time on the Continent. By exerting from the start a Christian influence, the strongest in at least eight contiguous townships, it had the advantage of securing more or less adherents to its faith and practice in each of them. Besides, it fostered the formation of several branches, as the Newport church had done, in separate localities somewhat near or at a great distance from itself; and exercised for them the solicitude and tenderness of a very loving mother. By ninety years ago two other meeting-houses had been erected in Hopkinton for the accommodation of members who experienced difficulty in attending services at the old place of worship. In both of them congregations met regularly on the Sabbath, and kept records of their own proceedings; and, at last, they were formed into distinct churches, and remain such to this day. About the middle of the last century, this church gave permission to some of its members to establish one in Shrewsbury, N. J., and near the close of it, the New London branch, as such belonging first to the original church and secondly to the Westerly, and as such, having existed over a hundred years, were, at their urgent request, incorporated into another church in Waterford, Conn., under the pledge to maintain "union and fellowship" with the body dismissing them. Near the same time, it assisted directly or indirectly the brethren and sisters who had migrated to Farmington, Conn., to Oyster Bay, Long Island, into the Little Hoosick Valley, and to Brookfield, and later into the Northern, Western, and other sections of Central New York, to constitute churches of their own. Since then it has aided in organizing another in Connecticut and four others in Rhode Island. These offsprings number at least forty.*

* Below is presented a tentative list of the male immigrants and a few others, nearly all of whom settled in Rhode Island, especially in its Southwestern portion, and also in Southeastern Connecticut, prior to the formation of the Westerly (now First Hopkinton) church in 1708; and who themselves largely and very many of their descendants were, during the period occupied by its early pastors, connected with this church, making in all fully five-sixths of its membership; and the descendants connected with these offshoots in Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey and New York, making over two-thirds of their membership:

John Allen, Arthur Aylesworth, James Babcock, William Bailey, Moses Barber,

The General Meetings were continued, with some intermissions, by the Westerly church through the remaining years of the last century. This practice early encouraged the Sabbath-observers in New Jersey and Pennsylvania to introduce movements of the same kind for themselves—that of the former state lasting to the present time. These in Rhode Island acquired at length great popularity. Visitors in their home-coming from the newly-established societies, as well as from older ones, were occasionally in attendance. Communications were sometimes sent to these bodies, expressing great interest in their welfare, and to the other yearly gatherings, urging them to promulgate vigorously the truth regarding the Sabbath. Such action was very influential. At the annual occasions here, coming after the harvests, there were generally present vast crowds of people. The house, the largest in the denomination, could not, very often, accommodate with seating, or even standing room, all the members from the different churches desiring admission. The grounds about it were filled mainly by young and middle-aged men, who assigned no sacredness to the Sabbath, and who regarded the event as affording a holiday season. Their conversation and shouting in plays disturbed the services of the congregation. During such hours on the Holy Day, they sold bread and vegetables near the meeting-house. They even, to the scandal of the society here, instituted horse racing, the sale of intoxicating liquors, and gambling operations in the immediate vicinity. This outraged church procured from the state the enactment of a law that such practices and all games should not be permitted, during its general sessions, within a mile of their house. Persons selected were authorized to act as a police force. But these assemblies effected a vastly greater result. By 1788 the exchange of letters and messengers with the annual meetings of the churches in Connecticut, New Jersey and New York became somewhat regular. Two years afterwards nearly all these bodies were represented by delegates at Hopkinton, which ordered communications to be written at once to them all. This custom was continued, with the occasional addition

James Barker, William Bassett, Samuel Beebe, Robert Bennett, William Bentley, Elijah Berry, George Bliss, Edward Bliven, Edward Boss, Thomas Brand, John Briggs, George Brown, Robert Burdick, Peter Button, Abiah Carpenter, Robert Carr, Bryant Cartwright, Jeffrey Champlin, Benjamin Chase, Christopher Chester, Jeremiah Clarke, Joseph Clarke, Francis Colegrove, Elizur Collins, Nicholas Cottrell, Hope Covey, John Crandall, Daniel Crumb, Aaron Davis, William Davis, William Davol, Tristram Dodge, John Dunham, William Dyre, Daniel Edwards, John Enos, William Fenner, Samuel Fox, Grace Frink's father, William Gardiner, Samuel Gorton, John Greene, John Greenman, Henry Hall, James Halls, William Harris, Thomas Hazzard, Henry Head, Jonathan Hill, William Hiscox, Obadiah Holmes, Samuel Hubbard, Joseph Hull, John Irish, William James, John Johnson, John Kenyon, Clement King, Andrew Langworthy, George Lanphere, Edward Larkin, George Lawton, Benjamin Lester, John Lewis, Abraham Lockwood, Richard Manering, Felix Maryott, Henry Matteson, Richard Maxson, John McCoon, Samuel Millard, Hugh Mosher, Adam Mott, Nathan Newberry, Thomas Nichols, Nathaniel Niles, Henry Palmer, Jonathan Palmeter, John Peckham, James Pendleton, Samuel Perry, Michael Phillips, Ephraim Pierce, Enoch Place, Nathaniel Potter, John Randall, Simon Ray, William Reynolds, Zachariah Rhodes, Edward Richmond, James Rogers, Tourmet Rose, William Ross, Nicholas Satterlee, Tobias Saunders, Anthony Shaw, Ichabod Sheffield, John Sheldon, Philip Sherman, George Slission, John Smith, John Spencer, Thomas Spicer, Thomas Stanton, William Stewart, George Stillman, John Sweet, Samuel Talbot, William Tanner, Robert Taylor, John Tefft, Isaac Thompson, Edward Thurston, Eleazer Truman, Nicholas Utter, Edward Vars, William Vincent, Thomas Ward, Thomas Wells, James Weeden, Thomas West, Stukeley Westcotte, William White, Pasco Whitford, Edward Wilcox, Roger Williams, Josiah Witter, Samuel Worden.

of brethren being sent in reciprocation to them. Before the close of the last century these churches reported their statistics and the names of their officers to the Yearly Meeting here. In 1801 it acted in concert with messengers from at least five other leading churches, in recommending that they all unite "in propagating our religion in the different parts of the United States," the beginning of our systematic work in missions. Preliminary measures were then taken toward the organization, the next year, of all the churches of our order into the permanent General Conference.

For a long time after, as well as before, the church was established here, its members were greatly affected in their ideas, tastes and powers of mind by the enterprise, culture and refinement of their brethren and sisters at Newport, the superiors to whom, in these respects, could not be found in the society of any other city in America, as this place was then its chief metropolis. The daily employments, the social customs, the school instruction, as well as the reading of pamphlets and books, the political transactions, and the religious exercises of the Westerly inhabitants were all fashioned, more or less after similar ones in their favored capital. Indolence, shiftlessness, intemperance, unnecessary ignorance, disregard of civil laws, sneers at religion and shallowness in preaching were not tolerated by them. The absence of illiberality, bigotry, and virulence in their treatment of other sectarian bodies was a marvel to intelligent and talented ministers of the latter preaching at times within the bounds of this society. Some of these Sabbatarian leaders became large and wealthy land owners, others seafaring captains, and still others practical inventors and successful manufacturers. Almost continuously for two hundred years following their original settlement in Westerly, a few of them, including pastors and other officers of the church, were chosen assistants and deputies in the Colonial Legislature and afterwards representatives and senators in the State. In the former number was Tobias Saunders, for several terms; and in the latter was Deacon Daniel Babcock, for over thirty years. Samuel Ward reached the highest distinction of any member in political life. After being Governor of the Colony for three years, he was appointed a delegate from Rhode Island to the Continental Congress, acting until his death as Chairman of its Committee of the Whole in the years 1774 to 1776. One of his sons was a Colonel in the Revolutionary Army, and highly esteemed by Washington.

The mass of the brethren supported all operations looking toward the development of the public interests of their state and of the country at large, and toward the final establishment of the American Republic. They encouraged colonization upon newer lands to the westward, and maintained that public improvements should be fostered and even effected, not only by the state, but by the general government. Some of them were engaged in the French and Indian War, and very many of them in the struggle for Independence, as minute men in watching and defending the coast in Rhode Island and Connecticut from invasion by the British. Soldiers from this region fought at Bunker Hill, Quebec and Saratoga, and with General Nathaniel Greene, at Trenton and Princeton. By unanimous voice the freemen of Westerly, in an assembly, adopted in 1774 an outspoken, explicit and patriotic declaration of the natural and inherited rights of the American people and of their unalterable disapproval of the encroachments of Great Britain upon these rights—a most admirable paper written by Gov. Samuel Ward. Equally as decisive and comprehensive was a document, numerously signed by the freemen of Hopkinton in 1776, asserting the justice and necessity of the resistance exercised by the American colonies against the fleets and armies of

England operating in this country; and also their fixed determination not to afford directly or indirectly any aid to these foes, but, on the contrary, to furnish ready assistance to these colonies in defense of themselves. Clarke in his history of our people in America states that it is not known that any members of this church "ever bore arms against their country" in the Revolutionary War. In the Rhode Island controversy on the ratification of the present Constitution of the United States, the citizens in the towns once comprising Old Westerly, generally arranged themselves on the national side. The members of this large and powerful church clearly apprehended the injustice and the public injuries caused by the inflated paper currency, both continental and state, of their day; and in a business meeting, attended by the prominent brethren, they denounced the act of one of their number, belonging to an influential family, to be a crime in discharging a debt of four thousand pounds in New England money, which debt had been created by borrowing that amount at its par value, by presenting irredeemable legal tender bills, sixty dollars of which, as reckoned in our present coinage, could be purchased with two dollars in silver. These deeds of loyalty to the constituted authorities raised them highly in the esteem of enlightened and zealous countrymen, and form doubtless one of the reasons for the subsequent enlarged respect shown them in the surrounding region, and perhaps for the rapid increase in their number of baptized believers.

The ministers during this period began each his pastorate in middle or advanced life. They were already experienced in the affairs of the church, some of them having served before as deacons who administered the ordinances and occasionally preached for it. They were familiar also with the social duties of a leader in the society. As those in Christian fellowship with them did not appear to favor imported elders, there were selected to be the shepherds of the flock only the brethren who either were born and had lived within the pales of the church, or had resided therein for some years before assuming their charge. They were well acquainted with the homes in the communities about, and truly sympathized with all the inmates of these, both young and old. They were usually vigorous-bodied, full-voiced, commonsensed, strong-willed and very conscientious men. It has been said to their praise, that no one ever accused any of them to be guilty of scandalous conduct. Some of them were very eloquent in speech and attractive in their manners, and popular in localities outside of our denomination. They showed that they did not possess the spirit of worldliness or love of pecuniary gain, as they earned largely the support for their homes and the money to meet their individual expenses, by farming; and as they consented to receive, for each day spent in the service of the church, the wages paid to a common laborer, three shillings of the current money, rated in our present exchanges to be equal only to a quarter of a dollar, since each shilling would be valued now at only about eight and a fourth cents. But this pittance had then greater purchasing power than its equivalent has to-day. They advised prompt and strict discipline in the church, particularly for violating the Sabbath and for drunkenness, the latter somewhat prevalent during a period before, and another after, the War of Independence. In doctrines of religion they ranged in their views between Calvinism and Arminianism, more often toward the latter, as they emphasized the freedom and ability of the human will, and held that Christ offered an atonement for all men, not merely for a chosen few, and that a converted believer could fall from grace and be finally lost. Their instruction was so judicious, their associations with the entire community so genial, and their prayers so effective, that no material schisms disturbed the church

during all their protracted service. Always distrustful of their fitness to preach with unction and efficiency, and hesitating at first to enter upon the performance of the work to which they had been chosen, they were very greatly helped in their consecration to it, when ordained amid the fastings and devotions of the whole day and by the laying on of hands—the two former by all their brethren and sisters, and the last by the ministers and deacons present. While nearly all the faces of these deserving and holy men have faded out in human memory, and, as a consequence, cannot now be represented to the eye of their living admirers, this attractive monument will aid in recalling to mind their acts and in perpetuating their influence on earth. Let the morning sun reveal its full proportions, its solid structure, and its definite significance, an appropriate symbol of their characters, to the devout worker as he early seeks here the inspiration and the divine guidance needed some day in his stern conflict with his lower self or with an ungodly world.

An extraordinary series of religious revivals has marked the progress of the church since 1719, the year of a fearful pestilence. The great awakening in New England that prepared its inhabitants in spiritual and other ways to endure the demoralizing struggles of the French War and the Revolution, reached the society here, who had at that time the opportunity to be powerfully stirred in their feelings by the preaching of Whitefield, the Barnabas of modern evangelists, while holding some meetings in this vicinity. In each of such pentacostal seasons, over a hundred, and occasionally over two hundred, persons were added to this church. During the eighteen years prior to 1786, the most trying time in the religious as well as in the civil affairs which this country has ever experienced, four hundred and seventy-six joined the membership. Under the long pastorate of Elder Matthew Stillman, six separate outpourings of the Holy Spirit, including the long-remembered one of 1835, occurred; and nine hundred and one brethren and sisters entered the fellowship. Meetings were held usually in the daytime as well as in the evening. The sermons were strong, searching and persuasive presentations of the elementary truths of the gospel. The prayers had the importunity of Jacob when wrestling with the angel from heaven, or pleading with God for deliverance. The church has always been blessed with having in its fold well-known laymen, whose excellent judgment and public exhortations could be called into most effective use at such times.

Perhaps the dissemination of our views and usages in America has been attained as much by the removals of our people and their settlement in new locations, as by the publication of our papers, tracts and books. In this movement the agency performed by this Hopkinton church and its earliest branches, since the first Sabbath-keepers penetrated the wilderness between this river and the ocean, can be measured as to its extent and importance by the fact, that about three-fourths of the present members of all our churches in this country are descendants of the fathers and mothers who worshiped here over fifty years ago and in its branches over one hundred. At least five-sixths of our ministers have belonged and do still belong to this posterity, many of them even after the fifth generation being designated by the family names of their ancestors. It is a boast of Puritanism, that one-fourth of the population of the United States consists of those who can trace their lineage back to early settlers of New England. How much more securely have the ideas, aims, and customs of our forefathers, into whose hands was committed the ark of the Holy Sabbath, two hundred and thirty-four years since, been preserved, exemplified and handed down from parents to their sons and daughters in all that time!

While we in our day are, perhaps, more aggressive in our advocacy and prosecution of the work of Sabbath Reform, the most vital and the most difficult to be accomplished hereafter among men, still none of us, after this long lapse of duration, has been enabled to comprehend more clearly, than did those first converts to the neglected truth, the fallacies in the arguments advanced for the observance of the First-day of the week, and the imperative obligation of the loyal subjects of God and of the sincere believers in the integrity and authority of the Bible, to rest on the day blessed and sanctified from the creation. Surely those old heroic saints, vindicating the Decalogue in its entirety, were endowed with a most sensitive and impressible conscience, with lasting convictions, and with settled purposes as immovable as the "hills, rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun."

But the progress of our cause through these many decades of years has been exceedingly slow, and discouraging to some. They do not understand the process in which a stupendous enterprise or a wide-spread movement that affects ~~our~~ invaluable interest of the race, must always be evolved and prosecuted to reach the desired result. On this subject all history is uniform in its instruction. To the qualified few, those selected by God, not to the multitude, is assigned the privilege of originating and developing such a work; and for it in its incipency and certainly when approaching its completion, these champions must be schooled sometimes through hundreds of years. Patience, courage, and trust must be cultivated to the fullest degree. Truth, whether religious or secular, conscious of its inherent worth, can wait, like gold in the quartz veins of the mountains, often for ages to be discovered and appropriated to the ends God has set for the well-being of men and for the glory of himself. Our fathers believed that the law of the Sabbath is continued and sustained by the Almighty; and that they must hold themselves in calm and assured expectancy of the arrival of the time he has appointed for its ultimate recognition and observance by the Christian world. Surely, when this triumph is realized, early or late in future history, an outcome of it cannot happen which will sanction a gross religious materialism; write in the accepted creeds of all sects and their churches a superficial and dishonoring view of the second advent of Christ; and establish, as substituting or supplementing the divine Word, the discordant revelations of a prophetess.

But let us study God's method of securing the *denouement*—the final issue. Often imperceptibly but successfully the preparation, like the gathering of snow and ice in huge masses on the slopes of the Alps, is made through vast and tedious periods of time in the movement to secure the requisite amount of materials and forces for the overwhelming descent of his power, sometimes arousing the thoughts and energies of thousands or millions of people to the uttermost in prosecuting a conflict for human rights, and in achieving a speedy justification of a righteous but long despised principle or undertaking. Yet, it is by such extensive and irresistible revivals, awakenings in communities and nations intent on the execution of a divine decree, which will, at last, cause an inspired and impetuous host of consecrated believers to march, like an army of drilled soldiers, on to victory amid shouts of hallelujah; and reveal the matchless designs of Christ, the Lord of the Sabbath, in effecting its final re-establishment in the world, designs stamped in letters of gold on the broad banners he raises into the sunlit heavens.

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